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PP RUEHWEB

DE RUCNDT #0669/01 2072254
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 252254Z JUL 08
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4693
INFO RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 1164
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY 9048
RUEHVI/AMEMBASSY VIENNA PRIORITY 0510
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 3316

UNCLAS USUN NEW YORK 000669

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SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PTER](#) [UN](#) [SZ](#)

SUBJECT: SWISS COUNTER-TERRORISM "PROCESS" CHALLENGES U.S.
WAR ON TERROR

REF: USUN 1006 (NOV 07)

[11.](#) (U) Summary. In November 2007, Costa Rica, Japan, Slovakia, Switzerland and Turkey launched a series of meetings described as the "International Process on Global Counter-terrorism Co-operation (Process)" (reftel). On July 24, they circulated a final document which states that the purpose of the Process was to provide an opportunity for frank and open, off-the-record discussion among a broad array of states, representatives of the UN and civil society. An Associated Press interview (para 5), however, indicated that the conclusions are a response to the U.S.- led war on terror and the counter-terrorism work of the powerful UN Security Council. The article quotes the Swiss UN Permanent Representative as saying, "It's an attempt maybe to shift, or should I say, to rebalance the focus away from the war on terror to a more comprehensive way of dealing with terrorism." End summary.

[12.](#) (U) Reftel reported the launch of the Process and plans for workshops in Switzerland, Slovakia, Turkey and Japan. The sponsors of the Process have now released a "Final Document" which they say reflects the key elements of the discussions that took place during the workshops. Curiously, both the cover letter and the document contain a form of disclaimer making it clear that not all the sponsors endorse each of the recommendations. For example, the report mentions, as an option, funding the CT Task Force through the UN regular budget, a position that Japan has repeatedly publicly opposed, as has the United States.

[13.](#) (U) The Report (emailed to IO) addresses actions that UN member states, the UN system, and regional and sub-regional bodies should take. There is a heavy focus on the work of the UN Counter-terrorism Committee's Executive Directorate, a body mandated by Security Council resolutions. The report recommends that CTED could be "transformed into a UN Secretariat office, department, or program which could service both the CTC and the Task Force. (Comment. Such a transformation would presumably remove CTED from control by the Security Council and put it under the direction of the Secretary General. End Comment).

[14.](#) (SBU) The Process report also calls for including human rights expertise on CTED site visits and contains a section with a series of recommendations for improving CTED's performance. Comment. It is somewhat surprising that states that usually share U.S. views on counter-terrorism would spearhead an effort which would undermine the effectiveness of CTED at a time when its recently renewed mandate has it poised to become an even more significant CT actor within the system. End Comment.

[15.](#) (U) Begin text. Panel urges anti-terrorism agency by

John Heilprin Associated Press Writer 24 July 2008.
United Nations (AP)

A Swiss led, five-nation panel proposed Thursday that the United Nations assert itself as leader of a global fight against terrorism and establish a new agency or program to coordinate that effort.

U.N. ambassadors from Costa Rica, Japan, Slovakia, Switzerland and Turkey suggested that the U.N. General Assembly create an agency for counterterrorism along the lines of the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency.

It also recommended that the U.N. assist counterterrorism officials from individual nations in promoting "a human rights-based approach to counterterrorism" that disdains torture and preserves prisoners' rights.

The panel, launched by the Swiss U.N. mission in November, is an attempt to involve more of the General Assembly's 192 member nations in fighting terrorism. It also seeks to shift some of the emphasis away from military or police work and onto grappling with interrelated social, economic and health factors.

Its proponents say the panel's conclusions, reached after holding five workshops on three continents, is a response to the U.S.- led war on terror and the counterterrorism work of the powerful U.N. Security Council.

"It's an attempt maybe to shift or, should I say, to rebalance the focus away from the war on terror to a more

comprehensive way in dealing with terrorism," Swiss Ambassador Peter Maurer told The Associated Press.

Another panel member, Costa Rican Ambassador Jorge Urbina, also serves on the 15-nation Security Council.

"There is a need to deepen interagency cooperation and cooperation, both at the national and international level, and this should not be limited to traditional counterterrorism actors, but also include human rights, development, health and social services," he said. "We continue to advocate for the creation of a body that unites all current U.N. counterterrorism efforts under one roof, and gives it a clear mandate and direction."

In March, President Bush said the global war's main challenges included securing Iraq, fighting al-Qaida, combating Iran's "destructive influence," and ending "the flow of suicide bombers through Syria."

But the panel pointed toward an alternative strategy, an approach based on a belief that the U.N. also must provide a framework all nations can participate in.

"The problem is that it is a one-dimensional view, suggesting that with military deployment and military means you can cope with the phenomenon of terrorism," Maurer said. End Text.
Khalilzad